

## Pet Ocelot Is 'Watchcat'

By HAL BOYLE  
WESTPORT, Conn.—There are many unusual characters in this community—artists, writers and intellectuals.

But "Mr. Smerdley," the only one in the neighborhood who sleeps in a Dutch oven, is perhaps the most unusual.

In an area teeming with watchdogs, Smerdley has the distinction of being the only "watchcat." He is a pet ocelot, a kind of tropical wildcat, owned by Arthur Kennedy, the well known Broadway and Hollywood actor.

Kennedy bought the wildcat, which came from Peru, as a five-week-old kitten on the West Coast while completing a starring role in M-G-M's film, "Trail of the Ocelot." Ocelot raising has become something of a fad on the West Coast, where two clubs devoted to the breed have been organized.

### ONCE IN GEORGIA

The ocelot, a tree climbing cousin of the common cat, is known scientifically as *Felis pardalis*, flourishes in Central and South America, once ranged as far north as Georgia. It is a beautifully spotted and barred animal of a tawny hue that, when full grown, is 2½ feet long and weighs 25 to 35 pounds.

These are ominous facts in the Kennedy household, for Smerdley at eight months is growing up fast on his daily diet of a pound of horse meat, two cans of baby food, and a special each of vitamins, cod liver oil and calcium.

Smerdley, who has developed a formidable armory of fang and claw, shows no interest in learning tricks and his main ambition in life seems to be to grow up a normal wildcat.

"We are enjoying a tentative relationship with him right now," said Kennedy, rubbing a deep scratch on the back of his head. He and his wife are currently wondering if Smerdley wouldn't become more amicable on a diet of strained spinach instead of horse meat.

### LIKES CHILDREN

Smerdley, while resenting adult handling, is quite amicable

to the two Kennedy children—Laurie, 10, and Terence, 12. He loves to attend weekly rock 'n' roll jam sessions in the studio barn with the neighborhood children, leans against the phonograph and drinks in the music—a real live cat.

"He also is quite a television fan," said Kennedy. "He particularly is fond of watching sports, such as football games, and likes to stay up for the late, late movie. But he doesn't care for westerns—too much shooting in them—and is indifferent to Brit-

ish pictures, which he seems to find too slow and talky. He growls when he wants the program changed."

His role as a watchcat hasn't been tested in action against a burglar. But the ocelot, who has radar-like hearing, growsl, hisses and spits at the approach of any stranger.

### ROBBED OF VIRILITY

Smerdley, part of whose resentment against life may stem from the fact a veterinarian robbed him of his virility while

he was a kitten, actively dislikes having his menacing claws trimmed.

"We trimmed them twice ourselves at home," said Kennedy. "Each time we had to quiet him with a couple of nembutal capsules."

Two 18-year-old Persian cats in the household infidly disdain all friendly overtures by this strange rude country cousin. So does Chippy, a 12-year-old cocker scalyham terrier.

"Chippy is willing to play with

him but he has a heart condition," explained Kennedy. "He can't stand the excitement."

Smerdley, who became housebroken in a few days, beds down in a Dutch oven in a fireplace in the old Kennedy colonial home, built originally in 1680. His potential skill as a burglar alarm is matched by his real skill as a ratter.

"There hasn't been a rat in the area since the day after he came," Kennedy said.

THEY DISAGREE

"Whether Smerdley? A zoological expert told the actor no ocelot ever made a completely satisfactory pet. Ocelot lovers disagree with this emphatically.

"I adore him, but he is a problem," admitted Mrs. Kennedy, who bears a few scratch scars herself. "The only one he

is cuddly with is Laurie."

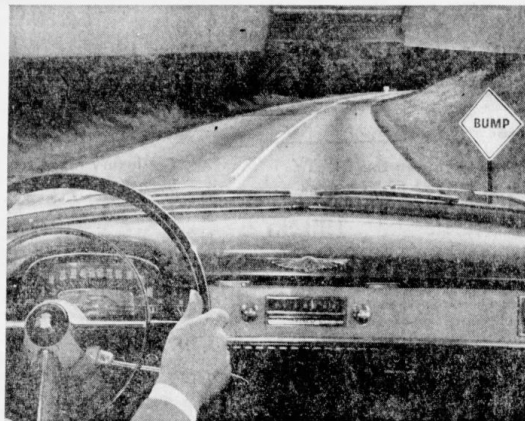
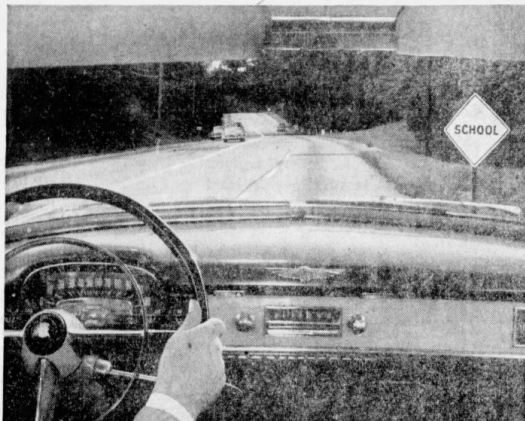
"He isn't very attractive," agreed her husband. "But he is absolutely fascinating to watch. That's his only charm."

"We're going to keep him as long as we can. Every time I mention giving him to a zoo, our daughter simply cracks up."

Unconcerned about his fate, Smerdley just keeps on switching his tail, growling, and growing, growing, growing.

### SHELL SAFE DRIVING QUIZ NO. 2

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## ...and these signs at 20 feet? \*



\* First, hold this page out at arm's length and see if you can read the signs in the two top pictures. Then place the page in an upright position and see if you can read the signs in the two lower pictures from 20 feet away. If you can pass none—or just one—of these tests, see your vision specialist immediately. Vision acuity data supplied by the American Optometric Association.

## If not, HAVE YOUR EYES EXAMINED BEFORE YOU DRIVE

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constantly. Possibly, you may want to tear out this page and try it on your teen-agers, too. For when all motorists drive safely and carefully on America's highways—our great personal transportation system—all of the time... that's the sign of a better future... for you... for all of us.

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### Traffic Deaths Above '54 Toll

CHICAGO (AP)—Heavy summer vacation travel has boosted the nation's traffic death toll to 1,900 more than it was at the same time last year.

The National Safety Council said today this year's death toll for eight months was 23,470, compared with 22,550 last year.

August deaths alone jumped 10 per cent, nearly equaling the 11 per cent hike recorded for July.

The last quarter of the year, the council said, normally is the worst because of bad weather and earlier sundown. The council urged cautious driving and walking for the balance of 1955.

Viewed from a mileage standpoint, the council said, the accident picture is much more favorable. Travel figures are available for only seven months, but they show travel was up 7 per cent and deaths for the same period only 4. This produced a figure of 5.8 deaths for each 100 million miles, the lowest seven-month rate on record.

### U. S. MISHAP IS REPORTED VIA HONOLULU

VAN NUYS, Calif. (AP)—The accident happened in Rawlins, Wyo., but police say the speedy report went by way of Honolulu.

A ham radio operator saw the accident on Highway 30 about 23 miles west of Rawlins and broadcast an appeal for aid. The message was picked up by another amateur operator in Honolulu, some 2,300 miles west of here.

The Honolulu operator relayed the appeal, which was received by a ham here and reported to police. Officer Freeman Calvert, who sent a teletype message to Rawlins, said the entire transmission took less than 20 minutes, probably quicker than if a witness at the crash scene had driven directly to Rawlins.

### New Managing Editor

NEWTON—Charles Harold Deal, Hickory-reared Korean war veteran, and formerly of Newton, has been appointed managing editor of The Ayden Dispatch at Ayden, and will join the newspaper as a stockholder, Ashley Futrell, owner, said today.

Mr. Deal is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Archie Deal of Hickory and a graduate of Lenoir-Rhyne College.

Notice to all Stockholders, Directors, Creditors and/or Parties in Interest.

A special call meeting of the stockholders and directors of Town House Grill, Inc. has been called to be held at 219 Johnston Building, Charlotte, North Carolina, on the 15th day of October, 1955 at 12:00 Noon, for the purpose of considering and passing on the advisability of a statutory merger of this corporation with the Honey's Minute Grill, Inc. This the 22 day of September, 1955.

TOWN HOUSE GRILL, Inc.